

Mayor's Messages

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SEPTEMBER 1, 2003

Ambassadors in the Center City

DCI's Downtown Ambassadors, clad in bright yellow shirts, are all the buzz in downtown Cincinnati these days.

They work on downtown service and cleanliness issues, patrolling the streets on foot, bicycle and sidewalk sweepers. They carry DCI's "Go to Town" Guide to hand to visitors. They offer a friendly face, information and assistance where needed.

The Ambassadors are also available for hire by downtown property owners to provide enhanced cleaning services such as increased litter patrol, power washing, graffiti removal, and for safety services such as event security.

Current contracts include one with the City of Cincinnati to provide enhanced cleaning on Fountain Square, and one with SORTA/Metro to clean Government Square, downtown bus shelters, and the Riverfront Transit Center.

Additionally, the company that manages DCI's Ambassador program, Block-by-Block, was recently hired by the City of Cincinnati to manage an enhanced cleaning



program in Over-the-Rhine. The Block-by-Block employees in Over-the-Rhine will be clad in the same uniforms—bright yellow shirts and navy shorts or pants - as the Downtown Ambassadors.

A unique partnership between the Ambassadors and the Cincinnati Police Department's Downtown Services Unit (DSU) has enabled these entities to make a larger impact in reducing crime, increasing arrests, and creating

friendlier streets in downtown and Over-the-Rhine.

This partnership has not gone unnoticed among downtown consumers, who have been attending monthly sector group meetings with the DSU and Ambassadors.

Sector groups consist of property owners, retailers/merchants, residents and other interested parties in a particular geographical boundary of downtown. Monthly meetings are held to identify, discuss and help resolve issues within each sector.

DCI and DSU representatives are present at each meeting to facilitate/ implement solutions to the problems, report progress and help identify positive stories that may be of interest to the media.

DCI and the City have also started a Virtual Block Watch program via DCI's website, gototown.com, and is encouraging people to join the program as volunteers.

For more info, call DCI at 513-421-4440.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Community Response Teams Crack Down	2
Crime Stats Update	2
Cincinnati Parks News	3
Downtown Tour of Living	3
Letter from the Mayor	4

CINCINNATI BY THE NUMBERS

These numbers were taken from the 2003 First Quarter, Quality of Life Index, for the City of Cincinnati:

- 3,998 miles of street swept
- 336 tons of debris collected during street sweeping
- 329 graffiti locations abated
- 483 litter citations issued
- 89 noise citations issued
- 99 building code citations issued

If you would like to view the entire contents of the 2003 Quality of Life Index, it can be accessed at <http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cmgr/pages/4400/>

cincinnati-oh.gov/cmgr/pages/4400/-

Community Response Teams Crack Down on Neighborhood Crime

Anthony Taylor's teenage daughter is chased to school everyday by cat-calls from a group of drug dealers. Anthony knows that these men are up to no good, but the police are having a difficult time making an arrest. This is where the Community Response Team comes into the picture.

The Community Response Team is a group within the Police Department, comprised of about 100 police officers from both the Investigations Unit and regular district officers. The CRT meets with community leaders and other concerned residents to learn about "hot spots" in a specific community. After meeting with residents and neighborhood police officers, a kind of sting operation is planned to focus on bringing down a specific person or place.

For example, during one community meeting, the CRT learned about an apartment building in the Northside, which was known to be a haven for drug dealers. In fact, residents told the CRT, if a car drove to the back of this apartment building and blew its horn, a man would

come out and to deliver drugs to whom-ever was in the car. The CRT followed the advice of the residents. When under-



cover officers did just as the residents said, a man came out, a drug deal occurred and an arrest was made on the spot.

Since this program began six months ago, officers have operated on only seventeen days, and the enormous success of the program can be seen in the results that it has produced in such a small time frame. On March 7, 2003 alone, the CRT made thirty nine arrests, fifteen of which were for felonies; they seized 11 grams of crack cocaine, 64.67 grams of marijuana and two firearms. Since these sting operations began in January 2003, officers have made over 1,000 arrests,

seized over 1,200 grams of cocaine, 420 grams of heroine, almost 10 kilograms of marijuana, and forty firearms.

The goal of the Community Response Team is to go into an area perceived by citizens as a hot spot, make several arrests and clean up the area in an intense raid over a period of a few days. The ultimate goal is to normalize a community and turn it back over to community police to maintain safety in the neighborhood.

Part of the success of the CRT is the ability to focus so intensely on one area or person. Often, the CRT focuses on finding violent offenders, like sex offenders or homicide suspects.

The most unique part of the Community Response Team is how closely they work with the community; this allows citizens to voice their concern about specific parts of their neighborhood and see big results in a very short period of time. It also allows Cincinnatians like Anthony Taylor to sleep better at night.

CLEAN INITIATIVE UPDATE

Through July, crime continued its steady decline in most Cincinnati neighborhoods and for the first time this year, showed an overall decrease in crime for the City.

Compared with the same time period last year, crime is down .5% across all of Cincinnati. Violent Crime is down 5.6% for the same period.

Drug arrests continue to skyrocket, and during July of 2003, police had 37.4% more drug arrests than they

had in July of 2002.

Visibility indicators also remain on the rise—parking tickets are up 55.3% year to date.

District One has seen a 15.8% drop in violent crime and a 51% increase in drug arrests.

District Two's total numbers remain small, however there has been a slight rise in overall crime in the area. Despite that rise, District Two officers have increased drug arrests over the same period last

year by 56.9%.

In District Three, violent crime arrests are up 13.9% and total crime is down 6.7%.

District Four has seen declines in total crime, violent crime and part two crime.

And in District Five, while total crime has increased, drug arrests are up a whopping 72.4%.

For the full report, visit www.cincinnati-oh.gov.

Cincinnati's Parks: Everybody's Backyard!

Residents are seeing lots of activity in their parks this summer, since the Park Board is investing over \$1 million in the City's neighborhood parks - the playgrounds, green lawns and shady woods that are everybody's backyard. Often, it is the park that is the heart of a neighborhood. It is our favorite place to get away or take kids to play. It is the place of fond memories, such as sledding down snowy Mt. Storm, or a first kiss hidden in the maze of Fleischmann Gardens. We are fortunate in Cincinnati to have 70 neighborhood parks, indeed being everybody's backyard!

The 2003 capital improvements under construction in the neighborhood parks are made possible by partnerships with citizens and neighborhoods. In one innovative partnership, the Hamilton County Park District will operate and make capital improvements to the City's Fernbank Park in the Saylor Park neighborhood. This "PARKnership" agreement, signed by the two park boards on March 25, 2003, enabled the Cincinnati Park Board to reallocate \$678,000 in capital funds for improvement projects in 12 other neighborhood parks: Inwood Park in Mt. Auburn, Drake & Kennedy

Heights Parks in Kennedy Heights, Glenway Park in E. Price Hill, Piatt Park in downtown, McEvoy Park in College Hill, Jergens Park in Northside, Rapid Run Park in W. Price Hill, Mt. Storm Park in Clifton, Greeno Woods/Mt. Airy Forest/Colerain Connector in Mt. Airy/Northside, Bellevue Park in Clifton Heights, and Stanbery Park in Mt. Washington.



Another partnership that generated \$500,000 was celebrated in a groundbreaking ceremony on April 17, 2003 at Drake Park in Kennedy Heights. Eleven neighborhood parks will receive capital enhancements, due in large part to the Cincinnati Parks Foundation's first ever neighborhood parks fundraising campaign. Eleven "Neighborhood Park Improvements Initiative" projects are under construction in East

Price Hill, Walnut Hills, Kennedy Heights, Mt. Airy, Avondale, West Price Hill, Evanston, Northside, and College Hill. Residents can watch for "Planting the Future" signs, which signal the start of improvements being made in their neighborhood park.

Between the "Neighborhood Park Improvements Initiative" and the funds reallocated as a result of the Fernbank Park "PARKnership," the Cincinnati Park Board is investing over \$1 million in neighborhood parks this summer alone. It is crucial to continue to invest in and maintain our beautiful parks in order to keep our neighborhoods vital and inviting



Mayor Luken, Willie Carden, and other Park Board Officials gather for the City's Fernbank Park "PARKnership" agreement.



TOURS OF LIVING DRAW THOUSANDS



On Sunday, September 14th, 2003, thousands of people will venture downtown to tour numerous apartments, condos, and loft-style living opportunities.

The yearly Downtown Tour of Living is sponsored by Downtown Cincinnati, Inc. (see article on first page.)

Each year, Cincinnatians get the chance to see what downtown and Over-the-Rhine has to offer in the way of residential living. It has

been the highlight of what has been a boom in downtown housing. Many young people, as well as many empty nesters, are moving to the area for the nightlife, urban atmosphere, and incredible living spaces.

The Downtown Tour of Living has given many other communities the same idea. In fact, Northside, Westwood, and Columbia Tusculum have all conducted their own housing tours in the past two years.

Each tour emphasizes city living and

showcases the new available housing.

If you want to come downtown for this year's tour, visit www.gotown.com or call 513-421-4440.

If you are interested in organizing a tour of living in your own neighborhood, call Brendon Cull in Mayor Luken's Office at 513-352-6298.

What: Downtown Tour of Living
When: Sunday, September 14th,
11a.m.—5:30p.m.

OFFICE OF MAYOR CHARLIE LUKEN

City of Cincinnati
City Hall
801 Plum Street, Room 150
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Phone: 513-352-3250
Fax: 513-352-5201
Email: charlie.luken@cincinnati-oh.gov

*This newsletter is also
online at
www.cincinnati-oh.gov*

DELIVER TO:

Letter from the Mayor

Dear Cincinnati:

About a month ago, I took a walk with some Northside community activists through alleys in the neighborhood.

The alleys were mostly overgrown weeds and trees, and filled with litter, trash, and other waste.

As soon as I returned to my office, I instructed our Sewer, Public Works, and Health departments to immediately fix the problem.

Within three days the storm sewers were cleaned and the Public Works department initiated a plan to remove the waste and litter in the alleys.

Why am I telling this story to

all of Cincinnati? I'm telling the story to illustrate that your City government is firing on all cylinders.

While cities across America are cutting back all non-essential services and are unable to get things done, Cincinnati is continuing to work diligently to address neighborhood complaints, reduce crime, develop neighborhoods, and assist our residents in leading healthy lives.

We know there are areas that we can improve, and that's why we utilize the Quality of Life Index—a quantitative way to examine if we are meeting goals and targets for cleaning up litter, enforcing codes, and improving neighborhood qual-

ity of life.

Crime continues to drop, the economy is showing signs of rebound, and our City services are becoming more streamlined and efficient.

Cincinnati is moving in the right direction for our future.

Sincerely,



Charlie Luken
Mayor, City of Cincinnati

Mayor Luken can be reached
at : charlie.luken@cincinnati-oh.gov or at 513-352-3250.

